

Message Text

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FOR EAGLEBURGER WITH SECRETARY'S PARTY AT THE REQUEST OF S/PRESS.

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SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON TOWN MEETING REPORTS

FOLLOWING IS NEW YORK TIMES STORY WHICH APPEARS IN COLUMN ONE
BOTTOM OF PAGE ONE, IN THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, FIRST EDITION:

QUOTE:

KISSINGER AIDES FIND AMERICANS DISTRUST POLICY

BY LESLIE H. GELB

SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON, SEPT. 15 -- TOP AIDES OF SECRETARY OF STATE
HENRY A. KISSINGER WHO, AT HIS REQUEST WENT TO FIVE CITIES TO
FIND OUT WHAT THE AMERICAN PEOPLE WERE THINKING ABOUT FOREIGN
POLICY HAVE REPORTED BACK TO HIM THAT THE PEOPLE FIND IT
LACKING IN IDEALISM AND MORAL CONTENT. THE THEME RUNNING THROUGH
THE AIDE'S REPORTS WAS SUCCINCTLY

STATED IN ONE: "IN SUM, WE FOUND DISTRUST OF THIS GOVERNMENT'S
EFFECTIVENESS IN CARRYING OUT POLICIES INTENDED TO EXPRESS THE
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PUBLIC'S HUMANITARIAN CONCERNS."

OBTAINED FROM CARTER SUPPORTER

THE REPORTS WERE OBTAINED BY THE NEW YORK TIMES FROM AN ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL WHO FELT THAT PUBLIC DISCLOSURE WOULD HELP JIMMY CARTER IN HIS QUEST FOR THE PRESIDENCY. MR. CARTER HAS BEEN STRESSING THE NEED FOR MORE ATTENTION TO HUMAN VALUES IN FOREIGN POLICY.

FROM EACH OF THE "TOWN MEETINGS," AS THEY WERE CALLED, THE AIDES CARRIED BACK MESSAGES THAT CONSTITUTED AN INDICTMENT OF MUCH OF MR. KISSINGER'S DIPLOMACY FOR BEING "INSUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED WITH THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS," FOR LETTING MOSCOW GET THE BETTER OF DETENTE, FOR CONDUCTING COVERT OPERATIONS AND FOR NOT DOING ENOUGH ABOUT DOMESTIC PRIORITIES AND THE NEEDS OF DEVELOPING NATIONS.

THE "TOWN MEETINGS" BEGAN IN PITTSBURGH ON FEB. 18 AND ENDED IN MILWAUKEE ON APRIL 30, AFTER SESSIONS IN PORTLAND, ORE.; SAN FRANCISCO AND MINNEAPOLIS.

THE FORMAT WAS ABOUT THE SAME FOR EACH. LOCAL WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCILS AND UNIVERSITIES WOULD ARRANGE DAY-LONG MEETINGS BETWEEN KISSINGER AIDES AND LOCAL BUSINESSMEN, LABOR LEADERS, ACADEMICIANS AND ETHNIC GROUPS. THE AIDES WOULD LISTEN TO THEIR VIEWS AND ANSWER QUESTIONS. TELEVISION TIME WAS ARRANGED TO ANSWER QUESTIONS ON THE AIR.

IN ADDITION PUBLIC OPINION SURVEYS WERE CONDUCTED ON 300 CITIZENS IN EACH AREA. IN FOUR OUT OF FIVE CASES, THE SURVEYS MATCHED THE IMPRESSIONS THE AIDES RECEIVED FROM THE MEETINGS.

THE MEETINGS AND THE SURVEYS COVERED FOUR ISSUES: SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS, RELATIONS WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, THE ROLE OF VALUES IN POLICY AND POLICY OBJECTIVES. IN SOME PLACES, FOOD POLICY WAS DISCUSSED AS WELL.

THE IDEA FOR THESE MISSIONS CAME FROM THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS BUREAU OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT. THEY WERE INTENDED TO COMPLEMENT MR. KISSINGER'S OWN SPEECH-MAKING TOURS, IN WHICH HE HAS BEEN DEFENDING HIS POLICY DIRECTLY IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES.

THE REPORTS OF HIS AIDES INDICATED THAT HE HAD NOT BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN GETTING HIS IDEAS ACROSS. THE REPORT FROM PITTSBURGH, FOR EXAMPLE, STATED THAT "DESPITE YOUR OWN MAJOR EFFORTS, THE DEPARTMENT AS A WHOLE HAS NOT COME TO GRIPS WITH A FAIRLY UNCLASSIFIED

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SERIOUS COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEM."

THIS REPORT WAS WRITTEN BY DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE LAWRENCE S. EAGLEBURGER, AND ASSISTANT SECRETARIES WINSTON LORD, SAMUEL W. LEWIS, AND GEORGE S. VEST. THEY IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING GENERAL REACTIONS:

SUSPICION THAT DETENTE IS WORKING MORE IN THE SOVIET UNION'S INTEREST IS COUPLED WITH RECOGNITION OF THE NEED FOR THE UNITED STATES DEALINGS WITH THE SOVIET UNION IN THE

INTEREST OF PEACE.

DOUBT THAT FOREIGN AID REACHES THOSE WHO NEED IT MOST
IS COUPLED WITH ACCEPTANCE OF THE NECESSITY TO BOLSTER THE
ECONOMIES OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

REJECTION OF ISOLATIONISM IS COUPLED WITH A FEELING
THAT FOREIGN POLICY IS NOT SUFFICIENTLY CONCERNED WITH
PROTECTING AMERICAN ECONOMIC INTERESTS.

SKEPTICISM THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS HEEDING
AND SERVING THE AMERICAN PUBLIC IS COUPLED WITH A YEARNING
TO SEE THE UNITED STATES PLAY A SIGNIFICANT AND BENEVOLENT
ROLE IN WORLD AFFAIRS.

WHAT THE REPORT DESCRIBED AS A "LONGING FOR A NATIONAL PURPOSE
BEYOND SELF-DEFENSE" WAS ECHOED IN THE OTHER REPORTS. THE
ONE FROM PORTLAND STATED THE CONCLUSION THAT AMERICANS
BELIEVED THAT "'WE' IN WASHINGTON SIMPLY HAVE NOT APPEARED
TO BE ANIMATED IN THE LAST DECADE OR SO BY THE SAME ROOT SENSE
OF RIGHT AND WRONG AS 'THEY' ELSEWHERE IN THE COUNTRY,"

FROM SAN FRANCISCO, THE MESSAGE WAS: "WE WERE STRUCK BY
THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS, WHATEVER THEIR SPECIFIC
VIEWS ON PARTICULAR PROBLEMS, FELT THAT THEY AND THE DEPARTMENT
RESPONDED TO THE BEAT OF DIFFERENT DRUMMERS." THE REPORT ALSO NOTED
THAT THE PEOPLE STILL WANTED TO CONTAIN COMMUNISM, BUT NOT BY
INTERVENTING IN LOCAL CONFLICTS OR BY COVERT MEANS.

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